

## **MINUTES**

Somerville Redevelopment Authority

Wednesday, November 18, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.

(Virtual Meeting)

Software: GotoWebinar

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. C. 30A, s. 18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, as well as Mayor Curtatone's Declaration of Emergency, dated March 15, 2020, this meeting of the Somerville Redevelopment Authority was conducted via remote participation.

Present from the Somerville Redevelopment Authority (SRA): Phil Ercolini (Chair), William Gage, Iwona Bonney, Patrick McCormick, Ben Ewen-Campen and Emily Hedeman. Also present were Eileen McGettigan as Special Counsel, Tom Galligani as Director of Economic Development and Sunayana Thomas as Senior Economic Development Planner and staff to the SRA.

Phil Ercolini, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:01 PM. Open session commenced. A quorum was present. This meeting was audio recorded.

### **Documents and Other Exhibits Used at the Meeting**

- i. Draft October 21, 2020 Meeting Minutes
- ii. Winter Hill Urban Renewal Plan
- iii. D-2 Closing Documents
  - a. Modification to D-2 Block Development Phase Approval
  - b. MLDA Amendment
  - c. D2.1 Lender Estoppel Certificate for Commercial Project Loan
  - d. D2.2 & 2.3 Lender Estoppel Certificate for Residential Project Loan
  - e. Lot 5 (Commercial Project Developer) Temporary Easement
  - f. Lot 5 (Residential Project Developer) Temporary Easement
  - g. Deed to MBTA for land for GLX Union Square Station
  - h. Deed D2.1 to US Union Square D2.1 Owner LLC
  - i. Deed D2.2 & 2.3 to Union Square RELP D2.2 Owner LLC
  - j. Deed D2.4 to US Union Square D2.4 Owner LLC
- iv. Winter Hill MEPA Documents
  - a. Environmental Notification Form
  - b. MEPA Certificate

## **Discussion and Actions Taken**

### **1. Approval of September 16, 2020 Minutes:**

€ Voted to approve (no motion).

Roll Call Vote:

Iwona Bonney, Yes

Ben Ewen- Campen, Yes

Bill Gage, Yes

Emily Hedeman, Yes

Patrick McCormick, Yes

Phil Ercolini, Yes

### **2. Union Square Update**

Mr. Karczewski provided the update.

US2 continues to work diligently towards receiving lab and residential construction building permits and closing documents with the Somerville Redevelopment Authority. The first several months of the project will be environmental and site work. Quarter 2 of next year will begin vertical construction. He also presented closing documents to the SRA so that the Chair and Secretary could be authorized to execute them in anticipation of the upcoming closing.

Board member requested additional context for D2.4 and the open space and affordable housing contemplated for that site. Mr. Karczewski clarified that the civic space in the D2 Block remains on the site as approved through the site plan application. There will be 90 units of affordable housing in the residential tower, also as previously approved. D2.4 is the southeast corner of D2 with frontage on Allen Street. It is a roughly 10,000 s.f. parcel, which will be converted to a neighborhood park, but US2 also agreed to work with Somerville Community Corporation (SCC) that owns the property abutting D2.4. SCC is working with Cambridge Health Alliance and Preservation of Affordable Housing (POAH) to develop a mixed-use facility and affordable housing on D2.4. SCC would use its parcel and part of D2.4 to develop the parcel in partnership with US2.

Gilman is the contract for the lab building, and Crenshaw is the contractor for the residential building. Board members raised a concern worth noting that there have been labor agreement unrest with Crenshaw at its Assembly Square project.

Board members requested clarification on the conveyance to the MBTA of the fee interest on the strip of land along the railroad right of way instead of an easement.

Ms. McGettigan explained that an easement is an interest in land but the fee interest is all possible interests in land. Initially, the agreement was to provide an easement to the MBTA for the station and US2 would hold the underlying fee interest in the land. However, US2 had liability concerns and asked the City to convey the entire fee simple interest to the MBTA. The MBTA gets a vertically limited area and the SRA retains the air rights above.

The original plan for Lot 5 was for US2 to own the entire D2 parcel, however Lot 5 was not included in the Coordinated Development Special Permit. There are outstanding environmental obligations the City has but US2 has agreed to undertake those obligations and find a permanent solution under the MCP. The easement is to allow US2 to use Lot 5 for construction staging.

**Vote to Authorize the SRA Chair and/or Secretary to execute all documents necessary and appropriate in order to convey:**

- (i) a portion of the D2 Block to the MBTA for use as the Union Square Green Line station;
- (ii) three D2 lots to the Master Developer for redevelopment as an office/lab building, residential tower, affordable housing and open space, respectively, in accordance with zoning and subdivision approvals and the MLDA;
- (iii) an easement to Master Developer over Lot 5 for construction staging

Motion made by Iwona Bonney, seconded by Patrick McCormick.

Roll Call Vote:

Iwona Bonney, Yes

Ben Ewen- Campen, Yes

Bill Gage, Yes

Emily Hedeman, Yes

Patrick McCormick, Yes

Phil Ercolini, Yes

**Vote to authorize SRA Counsel Eileen McGettigan to review all closing documents and prepare for Board signature.**

Motion made by Iwona Bonney, seconded by Patrick McCormick.

Roll Call Vote:

Iwona Bonney, Yes

Ben Ewen- Campen, Yes

Bill Gage, Yes

Emily Hedeman, Yes

Patrick McCormick, Yes

Phil Ercolini, Yes

### **3. Winter Hill Urban Renewal Plan**

Update provided by Tom Galligani.

Mr. Galligani reminded the Board of their vote to approve the Winter Hill Neighborhood Plan. A presentation was given to the Planning Board on November 4<sup>th</sup>. The Planning Board chose to wait until after the City Council's public hearing on the plan to take a vote to approve the plan. Once the Planning Board, City Council and Mayor approve the plan, staff will submit the plan and supplemental documents to the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD).

Ms. McGettigan explained that it was necessary to begin the MEPA review process, because an urban renewal plan is an automatic MEPA trigger. The MEPA process can take a long time, and the plan would not be effective until the MEPA process was completed. Since the Board's last meeting, there was a virtual site visit, and MEPA issued a certificate that stated no further environmental review is needed at this time.

A relocation consultant will be doing a virtual informational session for business and other stakeholders who may be affected by relocation on December 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### **4. 90 Washington Update**

Ms. Thomas provided the project update.

No project updates at this time. The City secured Colliers and Context as the contractor and architect for the public safety project. The community process for the private development is anticipated to begin between January and March of 2021.

Ms. McGettigan updated the Board on the pending litigation. The former owners of 90 Washington disputed the SRA's right to take the site by eminent domain through a demonstration plan. The SRA won the lower court case; however, the former owners appealed and the Supreme Judicial Court decided to take it up on its own motion, so the case essentially skips the Court of Appeals. The SJC has put out a call for amicus briefs to argue if a Redevelopment Authority has the power to take land under a demonstration plan. Other redevelopment authorities have executed demonstration plans, and the decision in this case will affect them as well as the SRA.

### **5. Assembly Square**

Ms. Thomas mentioned that the Assembly Square Neighborhood Planning process has begun. More information can be found on SomerVoice <https://somervoice.somervillema.gov/assemblynp>. The virtual kickoff meeting is scheduled for November 30<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm.

**6. Public Comment Period – None**

**7. Other Business Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair - None**

**8. Adjournment**

Next Meeting Date – December 16, 2020 – 5:30pm - Virtual Meeting

Motion to adjourn by Iwona Bonney, seconded by Bill Gage at 5:37pm.

Roll Call Vote:

Iwona Bonney, Yes

Ben Ewen-Campen, Yes

Bill Gage, Yes

Emily Hedeman, Yes

Patrick McCormick, Yes

Phil Ercolini, Yes